

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 0692

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TAGS: PINT, GH

SUBJ: DAILY GRAPHIC EDITOR RETIRES

SUMMARY: GOG HAS ANNOUNCED RETIREMENT OF I.K. NKRUMAH, EDITOR OF DAILY GRAPHIC, GHANA'S MAJOR NEWSPAPER, AND HIS REPLACEMENT BY RELATIVELY UNKNOWN DEPUTY EDITOR. EDITOR OF GHANAIAI TIMES, K. GYAWU-KYEM, MAY ALSO LOSE HIS JOB, POSSIBLY AS PART OF GOG EFFORT TO WOO ITS DETRACTORS. END SUMMARY.

1. ON JANUARY 24, GOG ANNOUNCED RETIREMENT OF I.K. NKRUMAH, EDITOR OF DAILY GRAPHIC, GHANA'S LARGEST NEWS-PAPER. HE HAS BEEN REPLACED BY J.K. ADDO-TWUM, FORMERLY DEPUTY EDITOR OF WEEKLY MIRROR, REPLACING ABDUL RAUF ALANDO, NOW GHANA'S AMBASSADOR TO SAUDI ARABIA.

2. IN CONVERSATION WITH USIS INFORMATION OFFICER JANUARY 25, I.K. NKRUMAH SAID HE HAD UNDERSTOOD HE WAS TO RETIRE ONLY AFTER JULY 1979 TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT. HE WAS SURPRISED AT BEING RETIRED AHEAD OF SCHEDULE, BUT DECLINED TO TIE HIS RETIREMENT TO MARCH 30 REFERENDUM ON UNION GOVERNMENT OR OTHER POLITICAL PLANS OF RULING SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL (SMC). INSTEAD, HE BLAMED "TRIBALISM", CLAIMING THAT MEMBERS

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OF AKWAPIM TRIBE IN SMC (INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE AKO, CHIEF OF DEFENSE STAFF AKUFFO AND "ONE OR TWO OTHERS") HAD WORKED FOR HIS REMOVAL BECAUSE AKWAPIMS WERE NOT GETTING FAIR TREATMENT IN PRESS.

3. NEW EDITORS ADDO-TWUM AND AIDOO ARE BOTH FROM

AKWAPIM AREA. ADDO-TWUM IS RELATIVELY UNKNOWN AND UNDISTINGUISHED IN JOURNALISM CIRCLES. HE ROSE FROM SPORTS EDITOR TO DEPUTY EDITOR, A POST IN WHICH HIS PRESENCE HAS PASSED ALMOST UNNOTICED. NKRUMAH SAID HE IS NOT A GOOD WRITER AND THAT HIS EDITORIALS ARE REPORTEDLY BEING WRITTEN BY OTHERS ON GRAPHIC STAFF.

4. IN CONVERSATION LATER SAME DAY, TIMES DEPUTY EDITOR ESSUMAN ASSERTED THAT NKRUMAH HIMSELF HAD ASKED TO RETIRE, AGAINST THE WISHES OF SMC. ESSUMAN SAID TIMES EDITOR K. GYAWU-KYEM HAD A FALLING OUT WITH MAJOR B. SALIFU, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF TIMES, OVER GYAWU-KYEM'S DESIRE FOR WIDER EDITORIAL AND MANAGERIAL POWERS. AS A RESULT, AND AS A PLOY TO WIN BACKING FROM SMC, GYAWU-KYEM HAD SUBMITTED RESIGNATION. ACCORDING TO ESSUMAN, GYAWU-KYEM EXPECTED THAT SMC SUPPORT WOULD QUICKLY BE FORTHCOMING BUT INSTEAD, NO SUPPORT WAS OFFERED; MOREOVER, HIS OFFER TO RESIGN WAS TAKEN SERIOUSLY. ESSUMAN SAID QUESTION OF GYAWU-KYEM'S RESIGNATION WILL BE RESOLVED THIS WEEKEND.

5. ESSUMAN TOLD IO THAT ACHEAMPONG HAS THE UNUSUAL TALENT OF BEING ABLE TO AX FAITHFUL SUPPORTERS WITHOUT APPEARING TO BE INVOLVED DIRECTLY. WE THINK IT IS UNLIKELY NKRUMAH IS BEING RETIRED BECAUSE OF TRIBALISM. IT IS PROBABLY MORE THAN A COINCIDENCE THAT GYAWU-KYEM, CONFIDENTIAL

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TOO, IS ON THE ICE. WE SPECULATE THAT SINCE BOTH NKRUMAH AND GYAWU-KYEM ARE DESTESTED BY MANY PROFESSIONALS HERE BECAUSE OF THEIR SUPPORT FOR ACHEAMPONG AND THEIR GRATUITOUS INSULTS TO PROFESSIONALS' MOTIVES IN OPPOSING UNION GOVERNMENT, THEY ARE BEING EASED OUT BY SMC TO REMOVE ONE OF ITS MAJOR SOURCES OF FRICTION WITH PROFESSIONALS. IF GYAWU-KYEM DOES IN FACT LOSE HIS JOB, WE WILL SEE THIS AS SUPPORT FOR OUR THESIS.
SMITH

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